

Journal of The American Institute of
ARCHITECTS



CHARLES F. MCKIM

June, 1946

The Seventy-eighth Convention

Developments in the University Library

The Political Art of Architecture

The Meaning of Design

Urban Planning in a Democracy

The Industrial Plant of the Future—I

Furtive Observations at Miami Beach

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The Seventy-eighth Convention

MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, MAY 8, 9, 10, 1946

In a forthcoming issue of *The A.I.A. Bulletin* there will appear a reprint of The Board's Annual Report to the Convention, together with the Treasurer's Report and all resolutions passed by the Seventy-eighth Convention.

WITH the three Florida Chapters of The Institute and the Florida Association of Architects as our hosts, the Seventy-eighth Convention could not have been other than a social success. The registration of over 500 and an attendance total in the amount of approximately 600 bore witness to the insistent call of the Southland for those worn down by northern winter and the general tangle of affairs in the construction industry. Incidentally, the registration of members and delegates was the largest in The Institute's history, due in large part, of course, to the increased membership.

If one were to epitomize this Convention in a single sentence, it might be said that one sensed, throughout the three days, the increasing vitality and authority of the younger generation. Many of those elder statesmen, long famil-

iar to Convention gatherings, were absent this year, and their absence was regretted. But in their places were many more of the younger architects, ready to carry on the torch and eager to make The Institute *their* organization, serving *their* purposes. It was a heartening atmosphere of progress, a promise of an expanding and virile Institute.

The optional trip by plane to Havana and across Cuba must have been additional inducement to attend the Convention. Deep-sea fishing trips, the surf bathing, and a hop across to Nassau had their respective appeals to smaller groups of members and delegates.

Nevertheless, the scheduled sessions of the Convention itself were all well attended—even the last session when a final adjournment scheduled for noon had to be postponed, without recourse to food or drink, until the press of unfinished

and new business was terminated by the president's gavel at three o'clock.

As these conventions continue to grow in size the problem of finding a hotel large enough to house all who attend becomes more and more difficult. Scattered as the members and delegates were in Miami Beach, among half a dozen hotels, even though all were within a few blocks on the ocean front, it was not always easy to find and have a meal or reunion with friends one particularly wanted to see. Headquarters for all under one roof is something at which to aim, even though it cannot always be attained.

The unopposed nomination and election of the officers for a second or additional year of service aroused, as it usually does, the question why we do not make a president's term two years instead of one, and save the time and trouble of renominating and re-electing him.

Douglas Orr who, as chairman of a Committee on the Structure of The Institute, had developed a broader framework for a growing membership and extended professional activities, found little trouble in carrying the delegates through formal acceptance of the

reorganized structure and its attendant by-law revisions. So the Institute is now functioning under the scheme of organization as outlined to the membership by word and by chart some months ago in the January *A.I.A. Bulletin*. Henceforth, much of the time-consuming detail which has, in growing measure, made it impossible for The Board to give full consideration to basic policies, is delegated to members of what should in time become an augmented staff. An expanding membership requires expanding services; within the framework of the new structure, and as funds become available, the membership will undoubtedly be better served.

The only roll-call vote required of the Convention made clear the wishes of the membership with regard to lists of architects pre-qualified for any hospital practice or for any other category of the kind. A resolution directing The Board to disavow a previous Board's action in acceding to the American Hospital Association's request for nominations of A.H.A. architect members to form part of their Architects Qualifications Committee, was adopted by a vote of 379.05 to 175.48. In the eyes of The Institute all members are

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equal in competency and integrity—at least that is our story and we'll stick to it, says the majority of the Seventy-eighth Convention.

At a luncheon for chapter officers, a new continuing body of such men, under the chairmanship of Clair Ditchy of Detroit, was formed to seek out and disseminate ideas and experience as to more effective meetings at the chapter level.

The informal Round Table Meetings, scheduled to discuss Schools, Hospitals, Housing, and The Meaning of Design, were found bursting their respective small quarters. The common complaint was that a member could attend only one of the four, whereas he would have preferred to attend them all. A popular suggestion was that in future conventions each breakfast hour might well be expanded to a Round Table Meeting on one timely topic of professional activity.

For the first time, the experiment was tried of holding an open meeting of The Board. To it members and delegates could bring their individual or chapter problems, or matters which, if submitted to the Convention would normally be referred to The Board

for action. The success of the idea prompted a request, by acclamation, that The Board would make the open meeting a regular feature of future Conventions.

Rebuilding America, the theme of the Seventy-eighth Convention, excepting for a brief attempt to pluck out a beam or two from the eye of a city whose sons promptly and properly resented that operation, was a masterly presentation. It called for the raising of our sights and the contemplation, in all humility, of the staggering tasks ahead. Not only through the exhortations of Sumner Spaulding, Jerrold Loeb, Henry Churchill and Louis Justement, T.V.A.'s Menhinick and Tyler S. Rogers, but also through the friendly words of Carlos Contreras from Mexico, were our conceptions of urban planning and its possibilities widened and made more clear.

The Florida Architects' reception and cocktail party, held under a bright moon in a lush garden of the tropics, needs for description a pen far more able than that of this factual reporter. Architects and their ladies have the reputation of shining brightly at cocktail parties. At this one, however, they sparkled and scintillated. Perhaps I had better leave it at that.

As if to gild the lily, the Annual Dinner of the Institute followed immediately after. The ceremony of conferring Fellowships upon seven members who had attained that high estate, was somewhat marred, in my humble judgment, by the fact that only three of the seven had journeyed south to receive the accolade. Those who for the first time are privileged to write F.A.I.A. after their names are: Louis Justement of Washington, D. C.; Samuel A. Marx of Chicago; Talmadge C. Hughes of Detroit; G. Edwin Brumbaugh of Philadelphia; Frank E. Cleveland of Boston; D. K. Este Fisher, Jr. of Baltimore; and Henry H. Guttersen of Northern California.

Twenty years late, but better late than never, the Gold Medal of The Institute, the highest honor within its power to give, was awarded posthumously to Louis Henri Sullivan. Paul Gerhardt, Jr., read a letter of acceptance, charged with deep feeling, from George G. Elmslie, close friend and literary executor of the man we so belatedly hail as master. The event brought assurance, in a later session, that The Institute would strive in the future to honor the living, year by year.

Roger Allen of Detroit, wired for sound, and energized by his own matchless battery of wit, presided as toastmaster, following President Edmunds' impressive presentation of charters to the California Council of Architects and the Indiana Society of Architects, and the Fellowship certificates. To say that Roger Allen rolled them in the aisles and under the tables is merely verifying the expected sequence. As a master of dead-pan wit, Roger should have been formally dubbed Knight of the Belly Laugh.

Sandwiched between two gay periods of Rogerana was an impressive and scholarly address by Philip N. Klutznick, Commissioner of the Federal Public Housing Authority, challenging the architect to accept the responsibility laid upon him by the nation's extreme need of more and infinitely better housing.

After the adjournment of the final business session there were tempting opportunities offered in a boat trip through the inland waters of Miami Beach, and a motor trip north along the ocean drive to Palm Beach, Boca Raton and the famous Stotesbury Estate. Many of the members yielded to one or both of these temptations,

while others built up sun tans to authenticate their visit, or strove to capture some of the abundant color of the residential areas on Kodachrome or Ansco.

And in six early-morning flights

of the big Douglas and Lockheed planes, well over a hundred soared across to Havana to see what that city and Cuba in general could offer to top off the Convention of 1946.

H. H. S.

The Industrial Plant of the Future—1

By George H. Miehl

PRESIDENT, ALBERT KAHN ASSOCIATED ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS, INC.

Excerpts from an address before the Rochester Society of Architects and a Group of The Industrial Management Council, Rochester, N. Y., April 1, 1946. The conclusion of Mr. Miehl's address will appear in the July issue.

EVERY ONE of us sacrificed something during the War. We changed our way of life so that those who were doing and acting on our behalf on the battlefield would want for nothing to make their efforts and their sacrifices successful with the least loss of time and of life.

This we did unflinchingly during the War. Because we did these things well during the War, we have again achieved peace. We achieved that peace through unity of action, individual unity and unity of nations. It cost us the lives and the limbs of many thousands of our youth. That loss is irreparable. It cost us irreparable damage to our natural resources; but it was achieved without the

ravaging of our cities, and the attendant loss of life experienced by so many other peoples. However, unless we regain and maintain our social conscience, our thrift, our family life, our desire and our zeal to produce, and to excel at that production; if we fail in the distribution of that production and fail to use it to raise the standard of life of our people, then we shall no longer be the victors, and we shall have lost more than we have gained. Our sacrifices will have been in vain.

What, then, should industry plan in its facilities of manufacture to gain the greatest efficiency? The War has taught us much about the facilities of production. It has taught us new methods of con-

struction; it has taught us to develop substitute materials, and to apply those substitutes in a multitude of ways. But out of our broad experience in wartime construction have come relatively few new materials. There have been developments in plastics, and these developments will undoubtedly grow as research is speeded. There were new applications of old materials, production-line methods applied to construction procedures, all of which should be useful in the era of construction which is here and in prospect. But it must be admitted that research during the War years was concentrated on works of destruction rather than construction, and many new materials which we have read about, or heard about or dreamed about, must await further tests of life, adaptability and economy before receiving widespread approval.

There has, however, been much refinement in our thinking. Trends, not always clearly defined before the War, stand out in sharper relief today.

Your new industrial plant will be located *outside* the congested urban district, permitting ample distribution of facilities, provision of expansion as conditions warrant with adequate personnel facilities.

Its location will be selected with a view to proper public transportation as well as adequate highways for private transportation. Given these factors, available manpower in the immediate vicinity, while desirable, is not of primary importance. However, in this connection, one important factor must not be overlooked. Since your new industrial facility will be located outside the urban centers, it will become the focal point around which you will build a new community. It will be an asset to that new community because it will be so constructed and so appointed that every worker will sense a pride of ownership. You thereby initiate the metropolitan area, because you begin to build a series of communities which transcend the urban boundary. You, therefore, who are concerned with city planning should set your sights over wider areas, because your planning must be confined not within the urban limits but over the metropolitan area which is being created. Your zoning, your planning, your taxation, your slum-clearance programs must be predicated on this trend because it is a fact, it is here and it will be accelerated.

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stress flexibility in plant layout, and provisions must be made in your design so that this flexibility is inherent. The American people demand change. Producers of motor cars, of refrigerators, of electrical appliances, of radios, and the thousands of products of American ingenuity and enterprise, encourage that demand, requiring constant alteration of layout and processes to achieve increased economy of production. This phase of efficiency of layout and flexibility in plant, to achieve that efficiency without major structural alterations, will assume major importance when profits are limited as they are today by the artificial means of price control—or as they will be later and in a more healthy manner by keen American competition.



This flexibility will be obtained by various means and the means will differ with the type of product to be manufactured. A one-story continuous-line-production layout may serve one industry and not another. A structural steel building may serve one industry admirably and with great economy, while a concrete, multi-story building may serve the purposes of an-

other much better. In general, I believe that for the large majority of mass-produced items, the horizontal conveyance of materials from receiving through manufacturing and assembly to shipping has proved to be the more successful. Industries which have never tried it before are investigating it today. Even the meat-packing industry, which, as far as I know, has always used the so-called gravity flow, is now seriously considering horizontal flow.

Much study should be given to the services and utilities which are necessary for production and their location in the building. The ultimate criterion of a good system of service distribution is its satisfactory operation after a major changeover. It is, therefore, essential that the planning should anticipate the major service requirements, and to so distribute them throughout the plant as to permit service connections at any point with minimum cost and minimum disturbance to manufacturing operations. Departments will be arranged in such a manner as to effect a simple and direct flow of production in order to eliminate costly handling and rehandling of materials. The ideal solution for economical production will usually

be found in routing raw materials or parts for assembly to one section of the plant, and then in uniform flow through the plant, not necessarily in a straight line, but without the necessity of crossing and recrossing production lines, to points of assembly, of storage and of shipping.

Should your industrial plant be of monitor type to provide the maximum of daylight throughout the plant, or should it be of the flat-roof type with controlled ventilation and controlled lighting? This question has come up many times in the past. It will be necessary to answer this question many times in the future. It has been a source of controversy in many quarters. In this connection, I feel somewhat like Mark Twain, who, when he was asked to give his views on the merits of Heaven or hell, answered that he did not care to be drawn into that controversy because he had so many friends in both places. Previous to the War we constructed many facilities for manufacture. In a vast majority of these facilities, we utilized natural daylight and natural ventilation to the greatest possible degree. From the standpoint of economy of operation and employee comfort they were effi-

ciently planned and have given many years of service. Many owners still prefer that type of industrial plant. But then came the War, and the hysteria attendant upon the possibility of bombing by enemy action. Blackout became the rule, and with it came the necessity of providing artificial ventilation and continuous artificial lighting. As a substitute for the central system of ventilation, with its complete duct-distribution system, we worked in conjunction with certain manufacturers to provide the less costly individual supply - and - exhaust units in the roof, to provide for the necessary air movement inside the building.

There came the development of the fluorescent light which produced a higher light level at working height at less expenditure in operating current and far less heat generation than the incandescent lights previously used. Today we are building both types of manufacturing facility — both monitor type and the type without monitors. What are the factors which determine the final decision? You can assist the owner in making the choice after an evaluation is made of the following factors:

(1) The monitor-type building permits of greater air movement

than the building with mechanical ventilation, but this air movement fluctuates with the velocity and direction of the wind.

(2) There is greater cost involved in mechanical ventilation than there is in natural ventilation through monitors, but mechanical ventilation will provide superior control.

(3) The lighting system must be installed to permit operations for more than the daylight shift, and, even with monitors, you will usually find that the lights are burning all day; the reason for this is the fact that in many industries workmen now demand a higher constant light level than daylighting can provide. The result is that in these instances the greater capital cost of monitor type construction cannot be amortized by the saving in lighting current costs.

(4) Are there processes inside the building which produce a serious condition as to heat, or smoke or vapor, which makes exhaust of a great amount of air inside the building mandatory, thus making it difficult to maintain a balance between the supply and the exhaust?

(5) The heating system for a building without monitors will

normally require less capital outlay than the building with monitors, and the operating cost is likewise lower.



As a result of our investigations—and except for buildings which are used for forging operations, or foundries, where monitors are practically mandatory, we have found that the initial capital costs of buildings without monitors are less than those with monitors; that operating costs of mechanical ventilation are higher for buildings without monitors than for those with monitors; that heating costs are higher for buildings with monitors than for those without monitors; that lighting costs for the initial installation are the same for both types. Therefore, in general, except for the psychological advantage that the monitor-type building may provide, the trend is toward the artificially lighted, artificially ventilated plant, with sash in the side walls where the worker can see what the weather is out-of-doors, and which minimizes the atmosphere of confinement.

Greater emphasis will continue to be placed on relations between capital and labor. There has been

a good beginning in the establishment of proper relations, and, despite current confusion, there will be a continuous improvement in those relations. Labor will demand and labor will receive a fair share of the value of the products which it produces. Good labor relations pay dividends. They pay dividends in continued efficient production and in the elimination of costly labor stoppages. The larger market for the products of industry is labor itself.

It is essential, therefore, that management provide agreeable and convenient employee facilities. The personnel department should be so located that applicants for employment may be quickly served.

This department should house the personnel records and have proper equipment for photographing, fingerprinting, X-ray, complete physical examination, and hospital facilities.

Throughout the plant there should be established easily accessible facilities for first aid, with access also to each for ambulance transportation for the more serious injuries. With the continued vigilance that most employers have established in the matter of safety, the proportion of serious accidents is constantly decreasing, with resultant better relations between employee and management, and with resultant lower costs to the manufacturer.

Developments in the University Library

By Robert B. O'Connor

IN THE January, 1946 issue of this JOURNAL, John E. Burchard, who is both an architect by training as well as Director of Libraries at M.I.T., asked why The American Institute of Architects could not organize and publicize the findings of such a meeting as that at Orange, Virginia, last October, of the Cooperative Committee on Library Buildings.

The group consisted of various university librarians and their invited guests in related professional and technical fields. The query was so well justified and the need is so great for a wider publication of the discussions of administrators and architects in various fields of technical planning, that this attempt has been made to condense into brief compass a few of the

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impressions gained from fairly close association with this study by a group of very able librarians whose institutions are embarked on construction projects.

The library has probably been no more subject to revolutionary demands since World War I than most other specialized buildings, but as a major element in the university's educational equipment it has been subjected to all the strains arising from the search for a sure ideological base amid a sea of confused counsels, at the very time that new technical requirements have been playing hob with the monumental structures of a more placid era. The most vivid single impression of these librarians' meetings has been the urgency with which they, and the architects and engineers associated with them, have been attempting to develop plans that will provide the utmost support for the educational policies of their institutions.

These educational policies vary, and local needs combine to cause rather wide divergences in plan. And I might say here that there seems to be complete agreement among the librarians of the Committee, as also among their architects, that problems of plan are fundamental in these studies —

whatever may be the claims of finance or appearance. But the philosophical program as well as the physical peculiarities of the particular situation must necessarily be the basic determinants of the plan. Of primary importance is the part which the library is expected to play in the education of its particular group of undergraduates, its use by graduate students and by faculty, and the desired relationship of students, faculty, books and, indeed, the library staff. For example, the problem at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where a major aim of the new library is to introduce scientific students to the humanities, will demand a quite different plan from one which caters primarily to research scholars in those same humanities.

It may be said that in his first two years the student's contact with the college library tends to be either for recreational reading or for prescribed work with a limited number of books. This gives rise to the browsing-rooms or lounge reading-rooms of so many recent libraries on the one hand, and the reserve book rooms on the other. There is much expert opinion among the librarians that reserved books are a thing of the

past, and that special rooms for them have no place in college libraries. For the moment, however, they are the simplest answer to the perennial problem of making a limited number of books available to large numbers of students within brief periods of time, and it may well be asked whether the common—and growing—insistence by universities on a minimum corpus of knowledge in certain fields of distribution, before the concentration of upperclass years, does not make their advantages even more compelling. This does not, however, weaken the very general desire to give those parts of the library where new students are first introduced an attraction, both in architecture and furnishing, that will conduce to pleasant associations with the use of books. It seems likely that the use of open-shelf reserves, as against the restricted list, will increase, and that as the facilities for instruction in the use of the tools of library reference, such as bibliographies, become better organized, fewer students will be dependent on reserve books.

This growing emphasis on the library as an instrument of reference for all students has placed much greater importance on cer-

tain features of the plan than was true in the recent past. Convenience of access to the catalogue and bibliographical material, both by the student and the staff, is now essential. This has led to much greater insistence on efficiency in the whole administrative layout, and particularly on the adjacency of ordering, cataloguing and charging functions to the catalogue and bibliography. What used to be scattered on several floors and in odd corners must now have the straight-line processing of the most modern manufacturing plant, if the library is to give adequate service on a reasonable budget. And on the other side the reference librarian should have equal access both to the reference tools and to the using public.



A second very lively impression of these Committee meetings has been the unanimity on the need for utmost flexibility in the library plan. While there is spirited argument on the merits and relative cost of prefabricated modular construction versus the more traditional structural methods on a modular unit, there seems to be virtually no disagreement with the aims of modular design itself. Not

only is the age-old curse of seemingly uncontrollable stack growth still with us, but we have new headaches peculiar to the atomic age, such, for example, as the sudden advent of government-inspired research into all sorts of hitherto unexplored fields, which may demand quite unexpected space and facilities. The librarians are convinced from sad experience that a building which permits change as well as growth is an absolute *must*.

This involves very real problems in a library where floor loads tend to place heavy demands on the structural system, and where lighting and ventilation vary enormously from use to use. To design all spaces for every conceivable need is obviously an impossibility. Besides which, the demand for great specialization in particular areas is almost a sure contradiction of the ideal of universal flexibility. So, as usual, there must be compromise. From these discussions certain standards of agreement are beginning to emerge. For example, a column-spacing of about 17' or 18' by 24' is about the minimum that is now favorably considered by these librarians, with a trend toward even larger spans. A ceiling height of 8' to 8' 6", with girders or ducts not less

than 7' 6" clear from the floor, seems to be the minimum that is acceptable. Unlike the tiered-stack construction of recent favor, the shelving is now independent of floor construction, though the standard 3' length of shelf and the generally accepted 4' 6" spacing of stacks will determine the basic module for the structural system of the entire building.

As to lighting there is as yet no common agreement on incandescent or fluorescent types, though there is a determination to keep the wattage per square foot down, say to 2½ or lower, due not only to cost but to the great effect of this load on the ventilating system. The flicker of single fluorescent tubes (except with direct current) and their occasional hum are disadvantages still to be obviated, plus the much shorter life they have where turned frequently on and off as in the stacks. On the other hand, their more equal distribution of light has distinct advantages.

The ventilation of these flexible bays is perhaps an even more difficult problem, because the load varies so greatly between little-used stacks and, say, conference rooms. The tendency is in the

direction of ventilating each bay with both supply and exhaust, though modular supply with a common exhaust has some advocates. But the latter tends to limit the subdivision of bays into smaller units, like carrels, if a balanced ventilating job is to be done. The importance of good ventilation in large stack areas is universally conceded, quite aside from the matter of flexibility to other uses, and also aside from the question of summer cooling, because the one surest protection for the books from damage by mildew and dust lies in thorough circulation of clean air.

The ventilating load, like the heating load, varies greatly around the exposed perimeter of the building from that of the interior spaces, and zoning of the system to handle the outer bays separately seems a likely procedure with the modular type of building. Contrary to popular belief, glass block tends to complicate this problem, especially in summer, where their transmission of heat by radiation may offset the most carefully designed temperature controls. Insulation of outer walls, both where exposed, and underground, is particularly valuable to reduce heating and ventilating loads as well

as condensation, and it goes without saying that dry basements as well are mandatory.

Space does not permit detailed discussion of technical developments which are affecting radically the science of library administration and, accordingly, the plans for new buildings. Microfilm and microprint are still in their infancy but they will undoubtedly influence many features of the library, from the size and equipment of carrels to the organization of catalogue and book collections. The institution of deposit libraries, for the storage in common of little-used books of many libraries, will have a material effect upon the rate of expansion of individual collections. The cooperative program of book acquisition, which has been urged by a number of outstanding librarians and is sometimes referred to as the Metcalf-MacLeish-Boyd proposal, offers another promising road to controlling growth intelligently. The abandonment of subject classification, which has been a cornerstone of librarianship for hundreds of years would, at one stroke, drastically increase the capacity of stacks and reduce the cost of cataloguing services.

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In this matter of classification lies much that will determine the direction of the specific library plan, as well as the general trend of university library design. Basically the problem is: what kind of contact with the books will the users of any particular library have? If it is principally a question of broadening the student's grasp of a particular subject or field of knowledge, the answer seems to lie in improving those techniques by which the associational faculties are stimulated. For this purpose, the smaller cultural library and careful subject classification have imposing historic precedent. Their continuing value is

clearly illustrated in Harvard's present plans for separating the undergraduate library from its main research collections.

When, however, the student's need is for intensity of focus, the problem is to facilitate the procurement of specific documents irrespective of their associational interest, rather than to entice the reader on to a broader tasting of the available material. The mechanics of the two are quite distinct, and it seems highly likely that in the future the planning and equipping of libraries at the university level will more and more reflect decisions as to the nature of their use.

The Political Art of Architecture

By Joseph Hudnut

DEAN OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF DESIGN, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

An address at the 39th Annual Assembly of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, Quebec City.

AMONG the psychological results of the Industrial Revolution none is more arresting than the changed attitude of mankind towards the city. Whereas in the seventeenth century—and indeed throughout the greater part of recorded history—the city invited and won the loyalty and love of

its citizens; in the nineteenth century, taught by the Industrial Revolution, men learned to hate the city and to picture it as a cruel and insensitive enemy.

Before the Industrial Revolution the praise of cities was a universal theme in the pages of philosophers. The invigorating free air

of cities, their power to provoke and delight, the sweet commerce which they afford of society and art, are repeatedly contrasted with the inhumanity of mountains, forest and sea and with the tedium and constriction of rural life. Today our philosophers have given the city to the devil. A mean and hateful habitation, an ambush for the spirit, corroding mankind with clamor, avarice, arid ritual, and foul gas, the city is only to be endured by those who have no other choice.

Thus it happens that the heroes of city planning are those who build escape-routes to the country; and even more acclaimed are those planners, sometimes called long-haired planners, in whose declamatory pages the city is altogether erased, its harsh outlines and taut energies being dissolved into green communities of contented seraphim.

Has the city changed, or has mankind? Did we make the city, or did it make us? By what accident or folly did we leave the cities we loved—the Athens of Pericles, the Florence of Machiavelli, the Paris of Madame de Lespinasse—to wander into these alien theaters? What angel enforced this judgment upon us?

What penitence will sheathe his terrible sword?

We can make no answer to these questions. Historians describe tendencies and the sequence of events, philosophers note the currency of ideas, and economists repeat the fictions which sustain their science, but none can explain to us how it happened that the city escaped the control of the human spirit. The incredible fact remains—and transcends our understanding — that the city which so faithfully accompanied man throughout his long upward journey; the city which kindled his mind, shaped the usages of his society, nourished the arts which illumined his life; the city which was his home and shield and outer garment—this city has become a wilderness, disordered and without horizons, a prison in which mankind is condemned to routine and futility, a machine whose daily bread is humanity.

Of one thing we may be sure: whatever may have been the cause of this sudden growth and transformation, neither growth nor transformation were foreseen or guided by the intellectual forces. Our present cities were not planned. They grew like great weeds from seeds whose fruit could not be imagined, being until then

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HALL OF GOVERNMENT, THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, WASHINGTON, D. C.
FAULKNER, KINGSBURY AND STENHOUSE, ARCHITECTS

The spandrel treatment permits the introduction of fresh air through the louvers

Photograph by Horydczak

Journal
The AIA



THE ARK, TEMPLE EMANU-EL, NEW YORK CITY

ROBERT D. KOHN, CHARLES BUTLER, CLARENCE S. STEIN, ARCHITECTS ASSOCIATED

The columns of the Ark are French Benou Jaune
and the remainder of the marble Sienna with inlaid mosaic

Photograph by Richard Southall Grant



SOCIATED

thall Grant

untasted. Casually and with little thought of social consequence men invented the factory; new sources of power, new organizations of labor, new methods of finance and of marketing, made possible its rapid multiformed expansion; and around that iron root a new type of city, nourished by coal and human misery, indifferent to psychological or moral change, threw its great arms outward into ever-widening acres of dishevelment. The cathedral, which had once been the generator of cities, had cherished and consoled all who lived beneath its towers; the palace, which afterwards created cities, had sustained that collective life with an ordinance and art of living; and even the fortress had confirmed in those who gathered at its base the discipline and loyalties which are sometimes the food of the soul. The factory merely used the city.

If we believe—and how can we help believing?—that civilized man is a product of society, how shall we escape the conclusion that our new cities will in time remold the humanity they encompass? We know how primitive man, in order to survive, conformed to a group pattern of thought and conduct,

receiving from that social unit which afterwards became the city not merely the processes which defended his life, not merely the scope and variety of the subject-matter with which he had to deal, nor yet the traditions and teachings and moralities merely which confirmed his individual consciousness, but the mind itself. That also was a consequence, as it was a cause, of civilized living. Since it was by living in cities that we became what we are, it is by living in cities that we determine also that which we are becoming. We may be sure that our new city will remake those who dwell in it, and it will remake these in its own image. We may be sure that in a mean and misshapen city there will soon live a mean and misshapen race of men.

We see each day the slow formulation of that new mind, tuned to the virtuosity of demagogues and tyrants, which has already defeated the brief liberalism of Germany and Italy and Russia and which may soon be dominant in Detroit and Los Angeles. We see how a new authoritarianism, factory-bred and market-guided, creates spiritual wastelands more arid and more vast, erases all meaning from communal activity, and each day raises before our eyes new

forms of slavery. We are mass-produced and, like the less sensitive articles of assembly-line manufacture, fitted for a standardized performance; we are molded into tubular patterns of work and play, of taste, opinion, vision and desire; and our cellular lives are ready food for those who would control the world with the weapons of mass ecstasy and mass prejudice.

If our democracy is to survive we must find the means for overcoming the effects of this excessive industrialization in our cities. We must give some meaning and direction to the collective life other than that implied by getting and spending, some dignity and radiance, some participations and loyalties and sacrifices far deeper than those engendered by the factory system. Since we cannot delay the march of industry—nor would we delay it, supposing that to be possible—we must create a civic mind tempered to withstand the attritions and subversions of industry. We must master this machine before it masters us.

Now I do not suggest that architects can by any exercise of their art restore the city to mankind. If our cities are to reassume the fraternal role they once played in

human history, clearly they must do so in response to influences more profound and far-reaching than any that are commanded by architecture. Whatever new temper may appear in the society of cities will arise from a collaboration, as frequently accidental as planned, of many agencies—diverse, obscure and often anonymous. The cities which were so congenial to the human spirit—Athens, Florence, Renaissance Paris—were made so by that spirit which broke through the prison of circumstances to leave its imprint upon their outward shores as upon their inward shores. Our new city will not be invented; and those who are irreverent of master plans and the utopias of architects will be, I think, sustained by the event.

Nevertheless, there is in the great drama of reconstruction which must now begin—in that re-orientation of our civilization to which the intellectual forces of our time are now to be addressed—a part prescriptive to architecture. In the history of cities the architect was less often the minister of private comfort and self-expression than the priest whose art captured and confirmed the depth and splendor of a community life. Not individual need and taste

merely but the life of the city as a whole was relevant to his practice, and he dared to play on that wider stage the role of master builder and interpreter.

We must re-establish that conception of our place in the scheme of the world. We have at long last broken through the boundaries of academic usage which prevented us from the life of our times, and we have cleared our hearts of that excessive romance which the colorful history of our craft engenders; let us now reclaim our ancient right of service to the collective soul.



Do not imagine that the building of cities is a matter for experts in traffic control, in sanitation, or in the making of bridges, and airports; experts are your servants. Do not abdicate before the high language and recondite theory of the social sciences; we are too readily overawed by such mystifications. Do not believe that the practices of politics lie above or below your grasp; architecture is a political art. Your part is beyond all of these to give form and balance and dignity to this necessary theater of life, to discover its meaning and make its meaning

known, to build a channel for the human spirit that it may regain and continue on this field its ascendancy. Do not believe this nonsense about "climbing on the planners' bandwagon"; the music is and always has been yours. Some new instruments have been added, not always played in harmony.

I am for a civic-minded and forceful profession. Wherever there is an architect there should be, if I had my way, a center of courageous initiative and responsibility. The architect, known as technician in building, as decorator, as merchant of fantasy, should be known also as citizen, resolute to use his science to lift and sustain the happiness of populations.

Since the environment of men has been from the beginning a critical factor in the development of the mind, since the visible and felt aspects of cities have indeed power to shape the people to live in them, city building is necessarily an art having the deepest sociological import. When the slums are cleared, when the people live in cleanliness and space, when good schools and recreational areas are available to every citizen, when the excessive volume and congestion of traffic no longer exacts its heavy toll, and when the people's institutions are

supported by organization and by competent facilities, we shall have established the basic conditions for social and political health. I do not promise a miracle; but we shall at least have implemented one fundamental of the democratic creed and by doing so proclaim the direction which other and less substantive agencies may take.

Among all the agencies useful to the reconstruction of civic life here is one that is positive in nature, directed towards tangible and attainable ends, and capable of intellectual leadership. There must be avenues through which the forces addressed to the good life may be channeled; fields upon which our collective strength may be gathered for the collective welfare. Here is such a field.

City planning is an adventure which all citizens may share and which, being shared, may evoke among them an awareness of a common interest and destiny. Here is an enterprise, not government-sponsored or directed by our industrial feudalism, which may cement among the people a new unity of purpose and action; a program comprehensible to the people and inviting their participation. Here we may hope not only to win one

battle against that deadening regimentation which is paralyzing the civic mind, but in winning it create that vision and confidence which will prompt other and more momentous crusades. Here is the general plan which fuses tactics into strategy:

A general plan implies a leader. I did not intend a sermon; and yet I cannot end this paper without suggesting some ways in which the leadership of architects may be made effective.

First, by knowledge and understanding. We should have a wider knowledge and understanding of the pattern of life in cities than that which now obtains among us. We should be aware of the growing crisis in society, the causes and the nature of social disintegration, and try to comprehend as a whole its nature and processes. Not only should our understanding be limited to negative factors only: we must not fail to note those agencies of self-healing which every evil, whatever its momentary triumph, always brings in its train. We should recognize, for example, that psychological need for collective venture provoked by our extreme individualism — the need which is sometimes satisfied by war

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and which might be satisfied by a broad and daring program of rebuilding. We should understand that need for purposeful effort, for an enlargement of personality beyond self-interest, which is surely one of the causes of civic discontent; and we must believe that an awareness of social costs, as opposed to money costs, is becoming each day more persuasive and more evocative of action in the political sphere.

A second essential is responsibility. It should be our task not merely to observe, comment and record, but to assume an active and generous responsibility for social health. Our weapon here is that process of enlightenment sometimes called propaganda: a process to which the art of city planning is peculiarly congenial. We must try to express clearly and persuasively whatever knowledge we may attain of civic malformations and we must give these expressions currency in picture, chart and published word. To that end we must bring out in their true nature those discontents with the existing scheme of things which are the deep sources of political action: we must encourage these discontents and in doing so not only make evi-

dent the contribution which planning might make to the social task but also the latent power for action which lies in democratic opinion. The people must believe that great things can be accomplished.

A third essential is participation. We should, at the risk of those inevitable errors of fact or judgment besetting even the most armored mind, sketch the patterns of thought and conduct which might point the way to new social and economic equilibriums. We should not wait for the city to come to us. We should from time to time lay at the feet of the city programs of action which might resolve in part at least some specific and urgent evil; nor should we take refuge behind high language and noble intention but make our proposals, rather, clear and immediately serviceable. We must understand our science as one integral to the city.

In this way—and in collaboration with all who search for the good life—we shall build channels for our art. The people will perceive in time the wider utility of architecture and will understand their need of architecture; and from that understanding will

arise numerous and vast opportunities for our profession. The people are in truth hungry for the dignity, peace, and meaning which architecture might give the city; but they will not discover nor take

to their hearts a profession too firmly guarded by academic usage or too exclusively concerned with individual comfort and polite expression. Architecture is a political art.

Edward Crawford Kemper Honorary Member, A. I. A.

ONE OF the most enjoyable moments of the Seventy-eighth Convention, A.I.A. came just after the conferring of Fellowships at the Annual Dinner of The Institute. President Edmunds called for Edward Crawford Kemper to come to the rostrum. In obvious wonderment Mr. Kemper came forward, while the whole company of some five hundred rose in spontaneous tribute, though no one outside of The Board membership knew what was to happen.

President Edmunds then read to a dazed Executive Secretary and to an appreciative gathering a Certificate of Honorary Membership:

EDWARD CRAWFORD KEMPER
having been duly elected to
honorary membership in The
American Institute of Archi-
tects by its Board of Directors
for his notable contribution to

the profession of architecture
through his unique achieve-
ment in the administration
and direction of the affairs of
the Institute during the many
years of his incumbency in
the office of

Executive Secretary
is hereby declared to be an
HONORARY MEMBER
THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE
OF ARCHITECTS

The certificate is signed not only by the President and the Secretary, as is customary, but by all four officers and the eleven Directors.

Article 2 of Chapter III in The Institute's By-laws reads thus:

"A person of esteemed character who is not eligible for corporate membership in The Institute but who has rendered a distinguished service to the profession of architecture or to the arts and sciences

allied therewith may be admitted to honorary membership as an Honorary Member of The Institute."

To the distinguished list of those so honored over the years,

never more than one in any calendar year, is now added the name:

EDWARD CRAWFORD KEMPER

1946

The Octagon, Washington, D. C.



Urban Planning in a Democracy

By Louis Justement, F.A.I.A.

An address before the Seventy-eighth Convention, A.I.A., at Miami Beach, May 7, 1946

IT WOULD probably not be too difficult to convince a majority of the architects concerning the desirability of rebuilding our American cities. Bad planning is everywhere in evidence and most of us have the imagination to visualize the advantages that could be created in the city of tomorrow. Unfortunately—or perhaps I should say fortunately—all Americans are not architects. On a most liberal estimate there is one architect to every 10,000 inhabitants. The politician is not apt to be too much concerned about the opinions of our profession, and it will be just as well for us to temper our enthusiasm by a sober consideration of the facts.

Federal legislation is usually the

resultant of various political forces that we call pressure groups. For quick results we may be tempted to look for support from a number of these groups and to frame legislation with a view to securing such support. It is sometimes possible to secure legislation on the basis of the pressure exerted by several relatively small organized minorities. When a new law has been adopted as a result of such minority pressures, however, we frequently find that its administration affects some interests adversely; if these interests are sufficiently powerful they organize counter-pressures that are able to effect the repeal or substantial modification of the original law. For some purposes it is possible

to proceed on the basis of minority pressures and counter-pressures; without this concession to practical politics we would have very little progress in a democracy.

The replanning and reconstruction of our cities, however, is a long-term program that will lose most of its value if it becomes a football of politics and is subjected to constant changes, interruptions and reversals of policy. It is obvious, for instance, that the financing of buildings on the basis of twenty-, thirty- and forty-year loans cannot be expected to proceed satisfactorily in the face of such uncertainties. Even more important, a city cannot be expected to embark on a program involving its complete reconstruction unless it has reasonable assurance that the program will not be brought to a halt by a sudden reversal of Federal policy. In dealing with this type of legislation, therefore, we should not be content with wangling a law through Congress on the basis of a combination of pressure groups. In the effort to do so, we would find it necessary to make substantial concessions to organized minorities in order to secure their support. Lacking general popular support, the new law would probably be

repealed or profoundly modified in a few years.

It would be unrealistic to suppose, on the other hand, that it will be possible to inform the entire electorate and convince a majority of the voters of the necessity for urban reconstruction. It is practically impossible to sway a majority of the voters on the basis of reason—or even on the basis of emotion—unless the subject matter is very simple; and we are dealing in this case with an exceedingly complex subject. Is there any escape from this dilemma? Must we choose between the futility of relying on small pressure groups and the impossibility of arousing a majority of the entire electorate? I believe that there is a third possibility more promising than either of these alternatives: we may attempt to discover a trend in political developments and frame a program that has a good chance for adoption and survival because it is based on taking advantage of probable long-term trends rather than immediate political expediency.

The present impulse of most of the voters is directed towards a removal of government controls and a return to *laissez faire*. On the other hand, the average citizen

wants security of employment and is fearful of re-establishing the conditions that led to the last depression. In the long run it is probable that the desire for security will be the stronger of these two conflicting emotions and that the nation will devise some form of compensatory economy that retains the more essential features of the profit system. The effect of war spending in producing full employment is one of those simple and dramatic facts which *can* be understood by the average citizen. The reconstruction of our cities would permit a vast offset to savings with a minimum of Federal grants and would, at the same time, improve the standard of living and give us a profound sense of constructive achievement.

It is almost inevitable, therefore, that the time will come when suitable Federal legislation for rebuilding our cities will be welcomed; it will be so urgently required that no pressure groups will be needed to force it on a reluctant Congress—provided that those of us who realize the value of city planning have, in the meantime, devised a reasonably comprehensive and workable program. Our responsibility, as planners, is to begin now to develop a program

that is sufficiently ambitious to stir the imagination of the voter and the politician—not this year but when the time is ripe. Let us not be frightened by immediate political difficulties, but let us patiently develop a plan that permits the rebuilding of American cities and yet involves the minimum of governmental controls consistent with the attainment of genuine city planning.



The word planning is at present in ill repute because many Americans associate it with economic planning, because we dislike the compulsions which it inevitably involves. Is it wise, however, to carry our dislike of such compulsions to the point where we refuse reasonable solutions only to be faced, sooner or later, with a crisis that results in *unreasonable* compulsions hastily devised to meet an emergency? The essence of planning, whether it be physical or economic, consists of forethought, the judicious weighing of alternatives and the selection of the solution that most effectively meets the needs of a given situation. There does not seem to be anything reprehensible in the procedure and we need not be frightened by cur-

rent popular antagonisms. We should, however, always remember that economic planning involves decisions that limit the freedom of choice of those for whom we plan. It will be necessary and desirable, therefore, to restrict such planning to the minimum consistent with the attainment of the desired objective.

It might seem, at first glance, that urban reconstruction is a purely local problem that can be solved by local means provided the city is given adequate powers by the state government. This is not the case, however. Before the land which is acquired can be made available for re-development on the basis of any rational density, an enormous write-down of the purchase price will be required. As a general average it is unlikely that such land can be re-capitalized at more than 25% of its acquisition cost. Private enterprise cannot be expected to assume this burden since its only motivation is that of profit. The city is dependent upon real estate taxation for nine-tenths of its revenue. This limited tax-base is the source of endless financial difficulties for our municipalities, and it will be unrealistic to expect excessive contributions from the city. If we

are to have genuine urban reconstruction it is inevitably necessary to resort to Federal grants and subsidies.

These grants and subsidies could be made subject to many conditions. It is not inconceivable that a Federal bureau of city planning could be established to review the plans submitted, much as the plans for Federally-aided municipal projects were reviewed by P.W.A. This type of Federal control should be resisted at every opportunity. The physical planning of our cities is and should remain a purely local problem. There are, however, certain other requirements which should be made a necessary prerequisite to Federal aid. I would suggest the following:

1. The municipalities should be required to cooperate in efforts to stimulate or inhibit the rate of reconstruction in accordance with the requirements of the business cycle. The primary advantage secured by Federal Government as a result of the loans and grants would be defeated unless this condition is met.

2. The Federal Government should audit local accounting in connection with urban redevelopment in order to assure honesty of

administration. This condition would, no doubt, be welcomed by most local taxpayers, for most of them realize that although local politicians are not always honest, they have a healthy respect for Federal auditors. This provision should go a long way towards meeting objections to the municipal controls that will be inevitable in any genuine urban reconstruction.

3. One more condition would seem appropriate in order to help the local communities to help themselves: the creation of municipal realty corporations and municipal planning agencies organized on the basis of, and having jurisdiction over, an entire metropolitan urban area. This condition may be violently resented as an unwarranted interference with local government. But the resentment is more apt to be found among local politicians than among the citizens. It is to be hoped that the latter, at least, will see the advantages to be derived from planning and rebuilding the city as a whole. It will be impossible to develop an effective plan for the new city if the planning is undertaken by several planning authorities, following the existing political jurisdictions within the

average metropolitan urban region. There is scant hope for effective voluntary cooperation between the planning authorities of these contiguous areas. Consideration for local political jobs and prestige too frequently outweighs consideration for the welfare of the entire metropolitan region. The inducements presented by Federal loans and grants can be used as a powerful influence to overcome these divisions and enable the various local governments to establish adequate mechanisms for planning and controlling urban property.

The three requirements I have described are based on the assumption that Federal control should be limited to a minimum. The first one is essential from the point of view of the entire nation; the other two are essential from the point of view of the city, for without them the city cannot solve its local administrative problems. Federal control should not extend any further. The planning of cities and the solution of the many problems of administration and the use of urban property should be matters for local initiative. No doubt many mistakes will be made in individual instances, but each

community will be responsible for its own errors and, contrariwise, will take pride in its own achievements.

Are there any recognized experts to whom we may assign the task of studying the needs of the city and evolving a suitable plan to meet these requirements? I don't believe there are. The kind of city planning that has been done in the past has been so restricted in its nature that it cannot be compared with the planning required for a genuine rebuilding of the American city if we take full advantage of the possibilities before us. For this greater goal we shall find that imagination and boldness are needed as well as technical skill, and the first two of these qualities are not always found in our city planning officials. If, however, there are no recognized experts to whom we may entrust the planning of the new city, how are we to proceed? There is no single answer to the question. I believe that we should seek to devise a procedure that permits and encourages a maximum participation on the part of all the citizens of a community.

It will be said, and quite rightly, that creative design is an individual and not a collective function,

and that the new city plan cannot be designed at a town meeting. It will also be said that only a few people in any town have any skill in city planning. On the other hand the citizen must not be made to feel that he has been cheated out of the opportunity of participating in the community's greatest effort. We should enlist the understanding and enthusiasm of a great number of citizens and yet permit the actual planning to be the work of individuals.

Many citizens have partial qualifications for planning the new city. The architect is trained to think in terms of functional planning; the manufacturer can furnish ideas with respect to industry; the realtor with respect to profitable land use; the engineers for the various public utilities have a definite contribution to make. The list could be greatly extended. Any citizen, regardless of his business, trade or profession, may be interested in the new city plan. To the extent that he is interested, he should be given an opportunity to express himself. The expression need not take the form of a ballot or of a speech at a public meeting. To begin with, we shall want ideas, and the man with ideas is frequently unable to make a

speech; and the ballot can only be used to express a choice between individuals or between ideas previously expressed.

Professional planners may recoil at the thought of deliberately inviting such widespread participation on the part of a public ignorant of the elementary principles of planning. Much the same arguments can be made against any form of democracy. It required an abounding faith on the part of men like Jefferson to believe that the people could be trusted to govern themselves. The new city should be built with the *aid* of the best planners we can find, but not *for* the planners. Let us have sufficient faith in the people to give them an opportunity to express their ideas even though it may take time and strain the patience of the professional planners—even though the final result is not as good, in professional eyes, as the product of a planning bureau. Mistakes in planning can be corrected far more readily than the mistake of allowing the responsiveness and the perceptivity of the citizen to atrophy through disease.

Let us assume that we have proceeded with the greatest care and deliberation to select the man who

is most competent to plan the new city. Even on the basis of the most fortunate selection, we have by no means reached the end of public participation; indeed we have just started. For if there is one principle of city planning that is more worthy of observance than any other it is that the plan should provide for flexibility and growth, and, above all, that the master plan shall be confined to the smallest number of obligatory requirements consistent with the orderly development of the city as a whole. The successful city planner will avoid details as he would the plague, and will concentrate all his efforts on producing a suitable framework within which various kinds of neighborhood planning may be developed. Within this general pattern there will be ample scope for variation and creative ability on the part of planners for neighborhood communities; and these planners should, in turn, leave adequate scope for the resourcefulness of the architects of specific projects in suggesting further improvements.

A few weeks ago I took an automobile ride through the beautiful farm land of southern Pennsylvania—the first long automobile

trip I had taken since the days of gasoline rationing. I could not avoid reflecting on the contrasts presented by city and country. A hasty first observation suggested that ugliness seems inseparable from the works of man, and that man is a despoiler of the beauties of nature. But this is quite obviously not true. I doubt whether the Pennsylvania countryside, before the arrival of the white man, could ever have looked as beautiful as it does today—and yet it has been completely transformed by the patient labor of generations of farmers. Without any attempt at creating beauty, merely as a by-product of careful cultivation, these farmers have produced a landscape which is a joy to behold. Here we see order and care within the farm unit, but the greatest possible variety within the vast landscape that stretches to the horizon. Had it been possible for one person to plan the development of an entire county, would the result have been as gratifying to the observer, or to the farmer?

The modern American city is so ugly and disordered that the city planner is apt to think exclusively in terms of the necessity for comprehensive planning. On the other hand, when large areas have been

planned as a unit the result has frequently been quite as ugly. We have merely substituted monotony for disorder. Even when we make full allowance for the crude methods of the speculative builder, it seems difficult to account for the drabness and ugliness of the modern city and most of its suburbs. The individual farmers are not artists either, and yet the aggregate result of their labor is most pleasing to the eye. Is there not in this fact something that should give us pause?



It is quite obvious that the development of a city cannot take place in the same primitive and unregulated fashion as the development of farmland. We must provide for a more ordered growth, and the survival of the city requires even more planning than we have heretofore envisioned. How will it be possible to solve the dilemma between the need of the city for logical and functional planning, and the desire for variety that results from the expression of individual needs and ideas? I am not sure that I know the answer to this question, but I believe that it is of fundamental importance to the art of city build-

ing and perhaps even to the art of government. It is a question which we, as architects and planners, should attempt to answer before we are faced with the responsibility of planning the new city. I believe the solution to the problem will call for boldness and imagination, two qualities I have previously mentioned; I wish now to add a third quality that is perhaps equally essential: that of humility.

Let us by all means be bold and imaginative in the schemes that we project on paper. But let us not allow ourselves to be enamored of a plan merely because it is our idea. Let us always allow ample scope for the creative ability of others. Let us always remember that the city should be built for the people who live in it, not for the gratification of those who plan it. The discovery of what the people really need and want is not simple and cannot always be deduced from statistics and questionnaires or from reasoning—no matter how logical the reasoning may appear to be. Some of our housing standards have, I believe, been based too much on assumptions concerning what the tenants of housing projects want — or should want. There would be

greater validity for these standards if they had been based on the choice of the tenants as expressed by the relative success of a great variety of projects. Regulations and standards should be the last resort of the planner, not the first resort as is too frequently the case. If this principle is observed we shall find greater acceptance on the part of the average citizen for those compulsions which are inseparable from the orderly and integrated development of the modern city.

The re-building of America will require the solution of many problems. We shall have a better chance to answer these questions successfully if we face the facts without too much fear of words. In considering opposite courses based on individualism or collectivism, let us not be alternately attracted and frightened by emotion into choosing a compromise path that does not offer the advantages of either of the other two. Our task as planners should not be to develop a politically expedient compromise but to suggest a program based on making full use of the possibilities inherent in collective *and* in individual action. The engineer, in designing a re-

inforced concrete beam, has no prejudice against either the concrete or the steel. He does not effect a compromise between the two, but he takes advantage of the tensile strength of the steel and the compressive strength of the concrete by designing the beam so that the qualities of each material are used most effectively. It is in this fashion that we should approach the task of re-building our cities. Where collective action is called for let us not be afraid to use it—full-strength when the situation requires it. On the other hand, wherever individual action can be used let us not be afraid to afford ample opportunity for the expression of individual thought. Let us beware of inhibiting the resourcefulness and creative ability of individuals by the imposition of arbitrary standards designed to overcome the evils of unrestricted private enterprise. Zoning regulations are a good example of how *not* to do city planning.

Let us seek to develop a program which permits the city and nation to accomplish those tasks which can only be accomplished by the city and the nation. On the other hand where private enterprise can produce greater variety and a richer, fuller life, let us not

hamstring it with regulations. Let us seek to create an effective partnership between the nation, the city and private enterprise instead of considering ourselves collectively to be merely the policeman over individuals and corporations.

The re-birth of the city is possible if we want it. It merely involves a little more thoughtfulness and imagination than the mediocre face-lifting job involved in our present methods for urban redevelopment. Our task as architects and planners is to supply the imagination and thoughtfulness necessary to devise an effective program. If we are successful in our task I think the time will come when our program is accepted because it fulfills a need.



The Producers' Council

RECENTLY ELECTED to membership in the Council are the following Company Members, with the names of their Official Representatives and Alternates:

Coyne & Delany Co., Brooklyn, N. Y., Val G. Maurer and J. J. McDonald.

Hanley Company, Bradford, Pa.; W. L. Hanley, Jr., and F. H. Thomas.

JUNE, 1946

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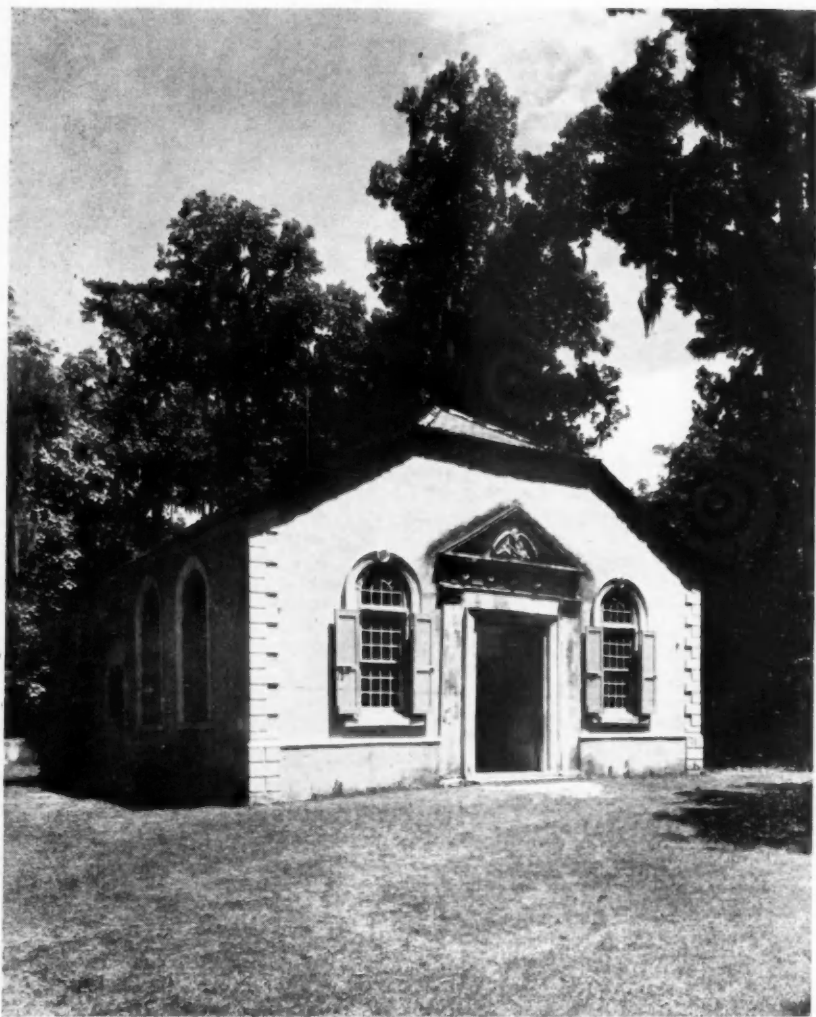
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ENTRANCE, LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE REFORMATION, WASHINGTON, D. C.
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Photograph by Thomas F. Scott

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Do you know this building?

Photograph copyright by F. S. Lincoln

GOOSE CREEK, S. C.

CHURCH OF ST. JAMES PARISH (1711).

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The E. F. Hauserman Co., Cleveland, O.; Fred M. Hauserman and T. V. Balch.

National Gypsum Co., Buffalo, N. Y.; N. A. Bialy and R. F. Burley.

L. Sonneborn Sons, Inc., New York, N. Y.; L. D. Eldot and A. L. Bromberg.

Wood-Metal Industries, Inc., New York, N. Y.; R. E. Nellis and C. F. Holloway.

Association Members recently elected are:

Acoustical Materials Association, New York, N. Y.; Wallace Waterfall.

American Home Lighting Institute, Inc., New York, N. Y.; Willard G. Sawyer and John W. Milford.

National Door Manufacturers Association, Chicago, Ill.; Earl Kenyon.

The Meaning of Design

By Ralph Walker, F.A.I.A.

Opening remarks by the chairman of a Round-Table Meeting on this subject at the Seventy-eighth Convention, A.I.A., at Miami Beach, May 8, 1946.

IN SPEAKING on this subject one might easily sound like Jeremiah, because we architects have been so concerned with merely earning our living that the world at large has taken us at that low point of estimation and the resulting influence upon our times has been small indeed. As in Jeremiah's own time, material qualities have obsessed our attention—we too, have become proficient in their making. Granting that efficiency has many meanings, may we not for the moment Flay the King and Praise the Lord?

I think it was Cruikshank who drew that devastating cartoon called "Majesty," in which there were two drawings, one showing the robe and symbols of kingly office, the other the meager piddling fellow underneath who stood on his shanks—high on stilted heels.

Architectural design has been much like this cartoon, often covered with a camouflage of one sort or another to hide the piddling knowledge of man's needs underneath. Nor has the modern stripping down to the meager frame

of man's material wants done much better, because now the poor thing stands wholly without grace or dignity—completely barren.

You may have heard of that famous series of descriptions: "The first man who cut and stacked brush into the rude shape of a hut contrived a shelter. When he rearranged the brush to make a better shelter he anticipated engineering. But when he made it over, not only as an adequate shelter but to please a critical if inexperienced eye, he created architecture. The first proved that he knew enough to come in out of the rain; the second that he had grown tired of dodging the leaky drops; whereas the third proved he could create a universe, an art, a philosophy."

It is of the creation of a universe, an art, a philosophy, that we may take a moment for consideration, for surely, in our sane, quiet moments, we must all agree with the growing opinion that the material approach to life has not completely satisfied all the needs of that life. It has been obvious for some time that the increase in the number of comforts is not necessarily synonymous with an increase in the standards of living; that "industrial know-how," that

science itself, may not have the answer for all aspects of pleasurable existence. I take it that even in these days one need not defend as a legitimate end of man the development of the "pursuit of happiness."

Design therefore represents to me an intelligent and, if possible, an inspired, seeking of that "pursuit of happiness" and an enlargement of emotional experience in space, in color, in form.

I am not interested in the attainment of these experiences solely from their emotional side but also, as I have said elsewhere, in their larger sense of economics, because surely it must follow that a full enrichment of our lives will also bring about a full employment of our resources and skills.

Personally, I am not impressed with either the borrowed distinction gained in using hashed-over Corbusiana or from stilted imitations of Classic forms which are the labored result of one unsure piece of tracing paper over another; or from machine-made multiplicities which promise much but give so little. All of these are but the changing externals of design which, for a seven days' wonder, hold the headline and cause their casual comment. The fundamental

human need for happiness is still stirring beneath and calling for solution.

I think the biggest problem confronting each one of us is in helping to create a culture which has its roots deep in our individual and immediate surroundings. Whether we individually employ what a friend of mine calls "a fundamental motif in design," that is, the "fret" or not, matters little if our own community as a whole does not develop a quality of enriched life; the present lack of which being such a poor advertisement of our influence. We should broaden our concept of the meaning of design beyond the detailing of the entrance doorway, to the relationships of the world outside; beyond the measured use of a modular plan, to a broader understanding of the usages which are the bases for the module.

We might, in our more intimate world, and in these changing times, increase our attempts to understand physical, mental and social needs. These are as much a matter of research as is the strength of a new steel compound, or the durability of a paint. Our interest in this type of research is necessary because it is difficult to find any design group whose major in-

terest, divorced from sales appeal, is in the understanding of basic and fundamental shelter requirements.

To further such research we may call on other professions for help. There is the physician whose knowledge of mental reactions to man's trying world is little used or understood. A group of medical men concerned with eyes and optics, for example, might—and some I know do—have interesting comments on today's use of glass walls; on the unwitting use of high-intensity artificial lighting in low headrooms, and of the related uses of interior color, especially in conditions surrounding work of close application. We should be especially interested in what causes physical and mental fatigue.

A group of social scientists concerned with how men, women and children live together will have, worth considering, points of view on the placing of dwelling units in housing communities; in the use of flowing road lines so much loved by site planners and developers.

There are men who are studying the psychology of form and color. They should be further encouraged, and their studied observations might better be followed

by the scientific-minded architectural younger generation than the maunderings of cubist painters and abstract sculptors. For it is here that I am amazed how often a form, old or new, is copied without evidence of critical analysis: how often a phrase denoting design philosophy is used without its meaning having been sensed. Such a form, for instance, as the popular "cellular prism," which resembles a commercial honeycomb with its glass-fronted case; such a phrase as "organic architecture," which can only mean the fulfillment of fundamental human needs but is rarely used in that sense. The "pursuit of happiness" must be indeed superficial which depends upon whether a shelter is supported upon either a lally or a Doric column.

We must look to qualities of deeper meaning if the profession is to rebuild America other than in the grossest manner. We must conceive of this rebuilding in a bigger scale than mere quantity, for we can design houses for living and for work beautifully related to man and nature; or we can think of them as machine-made repeats, where design can make the living as mechanical as the shelter itself.

The opportunity for a choice in quality is so limited to the "common man" in "his century" that, if he is to attain any real security of position, the communities we design for him should assume that he wants and knows more than merely to come in out of the rain. We need to be guided by a design philosophy which has social and political connotations, and for which we will work and fight. In the following I have tried to set down some such thoughts.

This then is "my place." It is a place where I, or anyone else who wishes it, may have a piece of land and with it a homely place. It is a place where the gregarious may talk from the windowsill to the children nearby, children who have plenty of companions, and a place to rush about in the rowdy games of unrestricted play; or to a neighbor nearby whose interests are like my own—a strong family, clean, intelligent—all of us desirous of a better life and earnestly seeking, although we do not call it so, a world much more happy and beautiful.

I do not mind working, but I expect that hours of possible leisure are not to be wasted in travel, or my energy crushed in the long and unnecessary crowding of those

journeys which I make daily to my place of work. I desire a job that has meaning—one which does not begin and end on stated hours—a job in the results of which I might have continuing pride. I would like, at my place of work, the possibility of a quiet noon hour and a chance for outdoor play if the weather permits. I would like a work place where at least I will know the "old man" when I see him.

A place where my children are trained in schools by those who love learning, whose interest is in the development of youth, and whose leisure is ample, whose viewpoint is forward and free.

A place where my vote, my political interest in the community, my voice in any organization—labor, craft, professional—any work or spiritual groups will be taken as an honest expression of a free man, and where that vote is not added up or subtracted merely on the basis of an abstract majority or minority.

All of this has nothing to do with *things*. It is a possible life and may exist in any time. It may sound like a Utopia, but one thing is certain, no such community would be called by any of its inhabitants a "project." Again all

this might be termed the metaphysical subtleties of design, and yet why employ an architect's interest unless he gains for his client something beyond the obvious, beyond the immediate necessity. I would plead that we be more than the providers of mere shelter. I remember an old jingle current in my boyhood:

Jack and Jill built on a hill
A house that caused much laughter;
They didn't hire an architect,
They merely got a crafter.

We need to know our environment. How often, through the ages, has this been said and how rarely in our time has it been observed; we tend to look beyond our own experience with its simple reactions to follow some illustration which is in fashion and which generally must be twisted and turned to fit conditions foreign to the soil on which it originated. So fashion has followed fashion—we recently went to Europe to borrow our fashions; now Europe has overwhelmingly brought back to us some of our own native ideas trimmed in a strange manner. We call the resulting chaos American architecture and the congestion of these fashions the American City. No matter by what euphony we

may call these blots on the American landscape the lack of our understanding of our own environments is all too evident.

For at rare occasions only is nature—the amazingly varied geography and flora which is ours—the beneficial winds generally more efficacious than air-conditioning—used to advantage. Our communities in plan and in architecture have without a real reason become increasingly more alike, more commonplace.

If we were more aware of our design responsibility, and this whether we design individual or repeat units, our communities would possess a harmonious continuity based on local needs and without doubt would be more interesting.

The commercial centers of all our cities are ugly, too often ragged developments from more pleasant beginnings of tree-shaded streets into today's honkey tonk of glaring neon. This has been brought about by the increasing influence of the advertising man; an influence as it affects the appearance of our cities far greater than our own. It is his demand for assertive individuality that has created the larger mediocracy so apparent everywhere and which

over-rides the local communities to their detriment.

Our own environment is a local one; in it, if anywhere, we have the opportunity of becoming and of creating an influence toward better design and especially design which may bring conscious pride to the locality. Frankly it can be said that if the buildings in our community are ugly, if the community itself is ugly, the fault is largely ours because we have not exerted the influence which I am sure can be developed.

It has been of interest to me that the G.I. polls indicate that these men prefer small communities rather than big ones; being one's own boss rather than working as an employee. This would seem only the latest advancement of the spreading and decentralized city form.



None of what I have just said should be taken as a denial of the value of change. In a world such as ours change comes willy nilly; however, unless that change is guided by a fundamental sense of proportion in living it will only add, as too often it has, to further confusion. Nor is this a plea for traditional design. The Rennais-

sance, Georgian England have had their historic day—they were but the waves of fashion which surged over the human needs below.

No recent culture has been continuous in long duration or in growth, each historical time produced briefly its own conception of art and of life. The dead bones of these efforts glisten in an archeological sun. But this is even more true, that no civilization lasts long which is merely intellectual and abstract; in fact, these attributes are the swan songs of a culture, sung when it has lost the power of warm creation. When art seeks the distinction of an academy it is past its virile powers even though the academy is called a modern museum.

To come back in the closing moments to space, color and form as basic emotional stimuli—man is an upright animal and to him the space over his head is as important as the space through which he moves. This space above him is that which gives dignity to his being, his beliefs, his coordinated and community effort. The space above him is the symbol of his greatness of soul. A truly great people will always seek to express themselves monumentally.

Man likes color: I have been blinded by the brilliance of color and pattern in your neckties. Surely a people who are as gaudy minded as our neckwear indicates will not long tolerate barren walls. We are also increasingly seeking the pleasure of the sun and nature; so we won't always go through life in smoked glasses afraid of the glare, talking of the beauty of plain surfaces and overlooking the ugly cracks that decorate them.

It is so easy to become tired of talk about philosophy and esthetics; it is also easy to say "Well, I like it the way I like it and so what the hell." I both admire and scorn the purely practical man, admire him for the many material comforts he has given us; scorn him when he fails to appreciate that these comforts can only have an orderly value when they fit in a larger world of design. We who are supposed to be a balanced combination of the practical and the esthetic must, it seems to me, play the latter more loudly and more often in a society already too material. Aalto recently told me a story of an ancient Chinese who gave his builder these instructions concerning the house he wished to have. The words are few but as

basic as they were several centuries ago:

"Every room must see the sky

Across it a tree branch show
And from each door I must see
The birds fly from east to west."



Architects Read and Write

Letters from readers—discussion, argumentative, corrective, even vituperative.



LUMP-SUM FEES FROM FEDERAL PROJECTS

BY FREDERICK FARIS, Wheeling, W. Va.

IN THE May issue of the JOURNAL, under "The Editor's Asides," you have included a paragraph with reference to inflation as it relates to the architect's costs. In this you state: "It is in cases where a lump-sum fee is quoted in advance that the practitioner would do well to watch his step."

In this statement you have touched upon a subject which has often been called to my attention in connection with projects which have received financial aid from Federal agencies.

On four projects of this type which I have designed within the past few years the regional offices of the agencies involved—USHA, FPHA and FWA—have insisted in each case that a lump-sum-fee contract be used, and in all except one instance that the fee be based upon a cost estimated by the agency. This cost did not agree with cost estimates prepared in my office, nor did they agree with contract awards on the project.

The agency estimate was low in every instance. The form of architect's contract which they used also made no allowances to the architect for compensation in connection with items of extra work performed on the work. Such contracts also give no indication of the unusually large amount of paper work which the architect has to perform, compared to a private job.

On my most recent project of this type—an FWA-aided job completed in January of this year—my total fee was 25% less under the lump-sum agreement than it would have been on the same percentage basis which the FWA approved and used in setting up the lump-sum on their estimated cost.

My experience with the various Federal representatives has given me a definite feeling that the agencies do not wish to use a percentage contract because they feel that the architect will overload the job in order to increase his fee.

This attitude is not actually ex-

JUNE, 1946

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pressed but is certainly definitely implied. I am not convinced that it is correct except in very rare instances; first, because most architects realize that the job cost must be as low as possible in order to have the project materialize; and, second, because all such Federally aided projects with which I have been connected have more than sufficient checks of other types to keep the project cost within the limits of design, material types cost, etc., which are in line with the policies of the agency.

If this subject has not been discussed previously with the Federal agencies who select architects directly, or dictate the type of architectural agreement a local

unit uses on a Federal-aid project, I think it should be considered as an Institute activity. I am certain that it would be of definite benefit to any architect to have this type of agreement eliminated.

My personal opinion is that a much better method would be to eliminate the Federal agencies entirely, but as long as we are living with them an effort should be made to have their projects on a fee basis which is not detrimental to securing competent and complete architectural services.

I hope that these ideas have been presented to you many times before, and will continue to come to your attention as long as this practice exists.

"SPACE COMPOSITION"

BY GUY STUDY, F.A.I.A., St. Louis, Mo.

I NOTE M. Jean Labatut bewails the fact that the urban planners and the architects cannot attend each others' conventions, since the two conventions are held simultaneously. If all the discussions at the urban planners' conventions are filled with such strange and vague phraseology as "space composition for the purpose of improving man's environment," "the art of manipulating the psychological and physical values of space," "the spiritual, intellectual and physical values, and high quality of the inner and outer space they frame," and "the spiritual and intellectual values of

space surrounding construction," perhaps it is not by mere accident that the two conventions are held simultaneously and far apart.

No doubt the ultra-modernists would assure us that this new phraseology is the natural result of a new manner of thinking; but I wonder if it is. One notes in it a touch of the chicanery that is frequently present in both showmanship and salesmanship.

As a model of clear, simple, unaffected English, the Modernists might read with profit the paper by Dr. Conant in the May issue of the *Atlantic*. Surely Dr. Conant

would qualify as a modern progressive, yet he has found it un-

necessary to resort to vague, meaningless phrases.

Books & Bulletins

STANDARDS FOR SCHOOLHOUSE CONSTRUCTION. By the West Virginia Council on Schoolhouse Construction: W. W. Trent, State Superintendent of Free Schools. 94 pp. 6" x 9". Charleston, W. Va.: 1945: State Department of Education. \$1.

Accumulated and screened experience and research for the aid of school boards, school administrators and architects.

MY FATHER WHO IS ON EARTH. By John Lloyd Wright. 196 pp. 5½"x8¼". New York: 1946: G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$3.50

There are passages in Frank Lloyd Wright's own writings that leave one baffled as to what he was trying to say. Not so in this indirect portrait of the father by son John. The latter is evidently clear in his mind about what he wants to say, and he says it. The chapter, "Head Man," telling of Frank Lloyd Wright's argument with St. Peter at the Gate, is top-notch characterization. We could wish several more chapters of its merit rather than the reprints of Viollet-le-Duc and Garnet's "The House Beautiful," both of which merely adulterate a stimulating concoction.

LAND ASSEMBLY FOR URBAN REDEVELOPMENT. 40 pp. 6" x 9". Washington: 1945: National Housing Agency. 10c (from Supt. of Documents, U. S. Gov't. Printing Office).

A study of the problem of acquiring sizable tracts for neighborhood redevelopment and of offsetting high acquisition costs for central blighted areas.

PROCEEDINGS, AMERICAN-SOVIET BUILDING CONFERENCE. 208 pp. 6½" x 8½". New York: 1946: Architects' Committee of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, through courtesy of the *Architectural Forum*.

Transcript of four panel sessions: Building Industry Organization; Prefabrication; Industrial Buildings; Mechanical Systems and Utilities of the Small House.



Department of Restoration

FOUND on the rostrum of the main meeting-room of the Miami Beach Convention: a tobacco pouch of brown cowhide with zipper. Owner can reclaim it from The Octagon.

JUNE, 1946

Furtive Observations at Miami Beach

Sylvanus Marston and Eugene Weston bringing their own oranges from their own Southern California.

Ned Purves breaking out, for the edification of all bathers, his native Hawaiian shirt, part of the spoils of war in the South Pacific.

Cincinnati's Charlie Cellarius, one of a very few visitors from the North who knew mangrove from sea grape, a banyan tree from a papaya, a royal palm from a Washington palm, or an oleander from an hibiscus.

Utah's Ray Ashton looking ten years younger since shedding the yoke of the presidency.

Past-president C. Herrick Hammond, with fire in his eye and vitriol on his tongue, rising to the defense of his own Chicago.

Clement Fairweather, rising above all the trivialities of Institute doings, wipes a slur from the immortal heroes of Dunkirk.

There is something grandly simple about life in a community which recognizes no coin below

the humble quarter, and where a haircut costs \$1.25 plus tip.

Query from a Californian to a Floridian: "Do you always have these hot and humid days here?"

Query from a Floridian to a Californian: "What's the matter with Southern California that it can't grow cocoanut palms?"

Goldwin Goldsmith peering out from beneath a green eyeshade for any parliamentary deviation from Roberts Rules of Order.

Lieutenant Commander Marshall Shaffer struggling to appear cool while all buttoned up in a Navy uniform.

The Julian Levis, part of whose purpose in coming to Florida was to see the Fairchild garden, and who never found it.

New York's Francis Keally arguing with South Florida architects against their habits of using so much white, and urging the gray of the royal palm shaft and the bronze of palm fronds as a basic background for small bits of white and bright color accents.

Arthur Holden canvassing the boat-ride passengers for votes that would shut off the megaphone man's descriptive patter as being unfair competition.

Tom Smith, the suave convention greeter of Miami Beach's Chamber of Commerce, making his address of welcome to the sweating visitors in a closely buttoned suit of thick black wool. Pure propaganda, we calls it.

Director William Kaelber wondering whether he had caught the prize 7'-8" sailfish, or whether the sailfish had caught him. This uncertainty must have influenced his decision to leave the fish on the dock rather than have it mounted, at one dollar per inch plus packing and shipping.

J. Frazer Smith of Memphis was appointed Recorder of the Convention, thus shutting him off from making any remarks whatever from the floor. As a reward he begs leave to nominate the Recorder for next year.

Ed Kemper's inspired remark when, without his knowledge of the due process of election, he was handed a certificate of Honorary Membership at the Annual Dinner: "This is the first time in

thirty years that I have really been surprised by an action of The Board of Directors."

Detroit's Alvin Harley, circumpect as always, but bringing with him Father Clancy, his personal confessor.

The stentorian voice of Secretary Robinson, masterly both in speed and control. Future candidates for the office should be required to pass an audition test, if the standard is to be maintained.

Joe Leland, newly elected Director of the New England District, who, with his numerous other qualifications, can do a rumba with the best of the younger generation.

Kentucky's Julian Oberwarth, after a wilting day in the mess hall, blossoming out in immaculate double-breasted white linen, a Panama hat and a batik tie, seeking what he might devour.

President Edmund's invention of a new schedule for Board meetings: 7:30 A.M., surf bath; 8:15, breakfast; 9, meeting; 12:30 P.M., surf bath and lunch under a beach parasol; 2, meeting; 6, surf bath and dinner; 8:30 meeting; 11 P.M., adjournment, a night-cap on the terrace and so to bed.

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